Pension to freedom fighters in West Bengal

*23. SHRI ASHIS SEN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of freedom fighters in West Bengal are yet to get their pension under the Central Freedom Fighter's Pension Scheme:

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) to (c) Of the applications for grant of freedom fighters' pension, received from the State of West Bengal upto the prescribed last date of 31-3-82; pension has so far been sanctioned to 22142 freedom fighters. The remaining applications could not be accepted as they did not satisfy the prescribed conditions. Of the applications received after the prescribed date, at present only 35 applications are pending exmaination.

Widening of National Higway from Vijayawada to Chilakaluripeta

*24. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the national highway between Vijayawada and Chilakaluripeta is proposed to be widened into four lanes;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what is the target date for completion of the said work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c). Four-laning of Vijayawada-Guntur-Chilakaluripeta section will depend on inter-se priority of various projects on all India basis and availability of funds for four-laning during 8th Plan. Due to constraint of funds, it is too early to say when the four-laning will be sanctioned However, preliminary steps to acquire land for the purpose have been taken.

Blindness due to lack of Vitamin 'A'

*25. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thousands of children in the country lose their eye sight every year due to lack of Vitamin 'A' intake in their regular food;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have conducted any study in this regard in the State of Bihar;

(d) if so, what are the details of findings of such a study; and

(e) what action Government have taken or propose to take to make adequate quantity of Vitamin 'A' available to every child in the country particularly in Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A survey conducted in 1986-89 has revealed that 04.46 per cent of leading ocular disorders are due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency. The prevalence rates of Vitamin 'A' deficiency in 0-6 years rural and urban population is 6.01 per cent.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The survey has revealed that in Bihar, 9.49 per cent of leading ocular disorders are accounted for by Vitamin 'A' deficiency as against the national average of 04.46 per cent. The prevalence rate of Vitamin 'A' deficiency in 0—6 years rural and urban population in Bihar was 8.99 per cent against the national average of 6.01 per cent.